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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 114525

14
ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 FEA-01 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04

ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 /087 R

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EB/OFP/FPD:PDTAYLOR
ARA/PAN:DWAGGNER
USDA/FAS:JRIESZ
ARA/ECP:ABERRY
---------- 054483
R 102354Z MAY 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EPAP, EAGR, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMANIAN MEAT EXPORTS

REF: (A) PANAMA 03171; (B) PANAMA 860; (C) PANAMA 2457;
(D) PANAMA 3077

1. EMBASSY SHOULD INFORM APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL IN GOP THAT THE U.S. IS UNABLE TO INCREASE THE PANAMANIAN ALLOCATION (CONTRARY TO IMPRESSION CARRIED IN REFTEL D) OR ACCEPT SHIPMENTS KNOWN TO BE ABOVE THAT ALLOCATION WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING THE ENTIRE PROGRAM. UNDER THE 1964 MEAT ACT, INABILITY TO ARRIVE AT SUCH A PROGRAM RESULTS IN A QUOTA SET AT A SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER LEVEL OF IMPORTS.
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PAGE 02 STATE 114525

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE BUTZ

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AND OFFICIALS OF DEPT. OF STATE WILL BE DISCUSSING
THESE PROBLEMS WITH PAREDES MAY 12.

2. AS OF APRIL 16, CUSTOMS SHOWS IMPORTS OF BEEF FROM
PANAMA UNDER TSUS CATEGORIES 106.10 AND 106.20 OF 3.1
MILLION POUNDS. OVER SAME PERIOD, USDA MEAT INSPECTION
STATISTICS SHOW ENTRY OF 4.1 MILLION POUNDS. DURING THE
PERIOD JAN-MARCH 1976, CENSUS SHOWS IMPORTS OF 208,000
LBS. UNDER ITEM TSUS 107.60 (STEW MEAT); OF THIS TOTAL,

IMPORTS FOR MARCH WERE 143,000 LBS. FURTHER INFORMATION
TSUS 107.60 WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR SEVERAL WEEKS.

3. AUSTRALIAN BEEF ENTERING U.S. BY WAY OF PANAMA ESTI-
MATED REFTEL C AT SOME 1.2 MILLION LBS. REFTEL A PLACES
ESTIMATE AT 3.0 MILLION LBS. REQUEST EMBASSY'S VERIFICA-
TION OF SHIPPING MORATORIUM REPORTED REFTEL C.

4. CUSTOMS HAS BEEN ASKED TO RULE ON THE COUNTRY OF
ORIGIN OF REEXPORTED MEAT. WE HOPE TO OBTAIN RULING IN
NEAR FUTURE. IMPORTANT FACTORS APPEAR TO BE 1) DEGREE
OF PROCESSING, AND 2) WHETHER MEAT HAD ENTERED COMMERCE
OF COUNTRY THROUGH WHICH TRANSSHIPMENT MADE.

5. EMBASSY NOTED, REFTEL B, CATTLEMEN'S CONCERN THAT
AUSTRALIAN MEAT MIGHT BE SOLD IN PANAMA'S DOMESTIC
MARKET. REQUEST EMBASSY REPORT ANY AGREEMENTS, TACIT OR
FORMAL, OR RESTRICTIONSWHICH HAVE PREVENTED AUSTRALIAN
MEAT ENTERING PANAMA'S DOMESTIC MARKET.

6. AUSTRALIAN MEAT COMING THROUGH PANAMA INSUFFICIENTLY
PROCESSED TO CHANGE TARIFF CATEGORY. THEREFORE, IF
OPERATION (REFTEL A) MOVED TO PUERTO RICEOO, MEAT
WOULD STILL BE COUNTED AGAINST SOME COUNTRY'S VOLUNTARY
RESTRAINT ALLOCATION. PLANT LOCATED IN PUERTO RICE FREE
TRADE ZONE CURRENTLY OPERATING WITH AUSTRALIAN MEAT THAT
IS BEING RE-PROCESSED FOR SHIPMENT TO U.S. AS MEAT NOT
SUBJECT TO VRA (I.E. ENTRY IN TSUS 107.60). PLANT
OPERATING AT CAPACITY.

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7. EMBASSY REPORTED REFTEL B THAT PANAMANIAN NATIONAL
CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION WOULD BE ALLOUED TO PLACE IN-
SPECTORS IN EACH OF THE MEAT PACKING PLANT APPROVED FOR
EXPORT TO ENSURE THAT AUSTRALIAN BEEF IS BEING PROCESSED
INTO STEW BEEF FOR EXPORT OUTSIDE THE RESTRAINT ALLOCA-
TION. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S REPORT AS TO WHETHER
SUCH INSPECTION TOOK PLACE.

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8. HAVE UNCONFIRMED TRADE INFORMATION THAT SAN PEDRO
CURRENTLY IN OCEANIA TO BUY MORE MEAT. KISSINGER

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